

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----107761 300446Z /12/65
O 300132Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8641
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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EXDIS

CORRECTED COPY (TEXT)

FROM YOUNG AND MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: US UK RH PDEV
SUBJ: AFTERNOON MEETING WITH VORSTER

1. THE AFTERNOON MEETING WITH VORSTER AND BOTHA WAS
DEVOTED ALMOST ENTIRELY TO THE PROBLEM OF THE COMMIT-
MENT TO BUILD A NEW ZIMBABWE NATIONAL ARMY (ZNA)
BASED ON THE LIBERATION FORCES. VORSTER WAS CATEGORIC
IN ADVISING US THAT IF WE TOLD SMITH THAT THE ARMY OF
INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE WOULD BE BASED ON THE LIBERATION
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FORCES, THERE WOULD BE A BREAKDOWN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.
IN HIS VIEW, IF SMITH ACCEPTED OUR FORMULA, HIS PARTY WOULD
THROW HIM OUT, AS, VORSTER SAID, HIS OWN POLITICAL SUPPORTERS
WOULD DO IF HE WERE TO BE A PARTY TO IT. HE WANTED
IT QUITE CLEAR THAT HE EMPHATICALLY DISAGREED WITH THE
CONCEPT. BOTHA WAS MORE EMOTIONAL ON THE ISSUE. HE
SAID THE EFFECT OF THE PHRASE WAS TO SHOOT DOWN THE

WHOLE PLAN. AND AT DINNER IN THE EVENING HE EXPRESSED ANGER AT HAVING BEEN MISLEAD IN LONDON WHERE HE WAS TOLD NOTHING ABOUT IT. THE EFFECT OF THE PHRASE, TA SAID, WAS THAT THE PROPOSAL FAVORED ONE SIDE. VORSTER SAID HE WOULD BE QUITE HAPPY TO LEAVE THE COMPOSITION OF THE ZNA TO THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER. IF WE HAD STOPPED WITH PARA 11C, CALLING FOR MILITARY COMMAND NEGOTIATIONS, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE, BUT BOTHA SAID WE HAD PREJUDGED THE ISSUE.

2. WE EXPLAINED THAT THE POINT WOULD HAVE ARISEN SOONER OR LATER. THE FRONTLINE OR PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD HAVE INSISTED ON A COMMITMENT THAT "SMITH'S ARMY" BE DISMANTLED. IT WAS TO OUR ADVANTAGE TO WORK OUT ARRANGEMENTS UNDER A CONTROLLED PROCESS DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THIS WOULD PROVIDE IT A BETTER CHANCE FOR THE CREATION OF A TRULY INDEPENDENT FORCE FOR AN INDEPEKCENCZIMBABWE. OWEN SAID THAT OUR COMMITMENT HAD BEEN NECESSARY IN ORDER TO GET THE AFRICANS INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. WE COULDNT LEAVE THE FORMATION OF THE ARMY UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION OR WE WOULD BE SADDLING AN INDEPENDENT GOVT WITH SEPARATE ARMIES LIKELY TO PLUNGE THE COUNTRY INTO CIVIL WAR. THE AFRICANS' FEAR OF A COUNTER-COUP FROM AN INTACT RHODESIA DEFENCE FORCE (IN THE EVENT OF A PATRIOTIC FRONT ELECTION VICTORY) WAS A REAL AND UNDERSTANDABLE ONE. TOWARDS THE END OWEN HAD COME AROUND TO

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THE VIEW THAT THE PROBLEM WAS ONE OF WORDING ONLY, AND HE TRIED TO EXPLORE A NEW FORMULATION. DURING A SHORT CAUCUS, HOWEVER, OWEN ACCEPTED OUR VIEW THAT THE COMMITMENT WE HAD ALREADY MADE TO THE FRONTLINE AND PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS TOO FIRM TO BE MODIFIED WITHOUT MORE CAREFUL THOUGHT.

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
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EXDIS

FROM YOUNG AND MOOSE

3. VORSTER STUCK BY HIS LONG-HELD POSITION THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER SMITH ACCEPTED. HE WAS PREPARED TO ADVISE SMITH, AND POINT OUT ALTERNATIVES, BUT HE REFUSED TO FORCE ANY PROPOSAL ON THE RHODESIANS. ONCE THEY GAVE A COMMITMENT, HOWEVER, HE WOULD PROMISE TO SEE THAT THEY LIVED UP TO IT. HE HAD ALWAYS DONE HIS LEVEL BEST TO SEEK PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, HE SAID.

4. THE MATTER WAS LEFT WITH OWEN'S STATEMENT THAT WE RECOGNIZED THE DIFFICULTY WITH WORDING, BUT IT IS OUR BEST JUDGMENT THAT WITHOUT IT WE COULD NOT GET ON WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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THE NEGOTIATIONS. WE WILL PUT THE FORMULATION TO SMITH BUT WILL NOT SAY ANYTHING TO HIM WE WOULD NOT SAY PUBLICLY. IT IS THE INTERPRETATION OF THE WORDING OF 11(E) WHICH IS IMPORTANT. SMITH MAY MAKE HIS OWN INTERPRETATION, BUT WE WILL HAVE TO STAND ON OUR AGREEMENT WITH THE FRONT-LINE. OWEN LEFT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WITH HIS VIEW THAT THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO GET ON WITH THE MILITARY COMMAND LEVEL DISCUSSIONS.

5. COMMENT: THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETING WAS FRANK. THE SOUTH AFRICANS MADE AN EFFORT TO BE REASONABLE. THERE WAS LITTLE POSTURING. THEY MADE CLEAR THEY PREFERRED AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO ANY OTHER BUT WERE NOT WILLING TO PRESS SMITH TO ACCEPT OUR PROPOSAL. THOUGH THEY FELT THE GUARANTEES PROVIDED FOR WHITES IN

THE PROPOSAL WERE UNSUFFICIENT, THE MAJOR STICKING POINT
WAS CLEARLY OVER THE COMMITMENT TO BASE THE INDEPENDENCE
ARMY ON THE LIBERATION FORCES. VORSTER SEEMED ANXIOUS TO KEEP
THE DIALOGUE GOING AND HE INVITED US TO TALK AGAIN
IN THE MORNING.

6. WE DO NOT NOW PLAN TO TALK TO VORSTER AGAIN--AT
LEAST NOT UNTIL WE HAVE CHECKED BACK WITH NYERERE.
WE WILL DO THIS TOMORROW (TUESDAY) MORNING. OUR INTENTION
TO EXPLAIN TO NYERERE THAT CONTINUED USE OF THE
"PREDOMINATLY BASED" OR EVEN THE "BASED ON..."
FORMULATION COULD ALLOW SMITH TO DEFUSE THE PROPOSALS
ON GROUNDS THAT WE WERE REALLY TRYING TO INSTALL
THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. IF WE CAN FIND A NEW FORMULATION
WHICH PRESERVES THE COMMITMENT BUT IN LESS EXPLICIT
LANGUAGE, WE MAY THEN GO BACK AROUND THE FRONTLINE CIRCUIT
AND GET EVERYBODY ON BOARD SO THAT WE CAN REASSURE
OURSELVES OF THEIR SUPPORT AT THE UN.

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